

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides for an icon with an additional level of functionality that allows a user to validate that current information (e.g., a web page) originates from the true owner of the icon and is not merely a copy. The method includes a user requesting a web page from a web site using a web browser. The web server receives the request, retrieves the web page and forwards it to an authentication server. The authentication server inserts an authenticity key into the web page, then the page (including the authenticity key) is returned to the user. If the page includes an authenticity key, the authenticity is verified at the user's computer because the user computer includes logic (e.g., software) to verify the authenticity. During the user configuration process, the user defines an authenticity stamp which determines the format of an authenticated page.

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